

THE KITCHEN & FOOD SAFETY

Health & Safety Procedure Title:		THE KITCHEN & FOOD SAFETY	
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INTRODUCTION

The kitchen is a key area in the home and it presents many hazards should residents have access. In order to avoid risks to residents it is critical that they do not have access to the kitchen. The kitchen should be locked when kitchen staff are not on duty and residents should be restricted when the kitchen is operational.

Food Safety is dealt with in HACCP, however some brief instructions are provided in this procedure. These are not intended to replace the HACCP codes.

**LAW/ REGULATIONS/GUIDELINES / CODES OF PRACTICE**

Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005 and the General Application Regulations - 2007.

HACCP

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PURPOSE

The purpose of this procedure is to inform staff, in particular kitchen staff as to the correct protocols and processes in managing safety in the kitchen, thus avoiding risks to residents, staff and visitors.

SCOPE

The scope of this procedure covers the physical aspects of the kitchen as distinct from the actual food preparation. From time to time references will be made to issues that are relevant to both, e.g. hand washing and personal hygiene.

POLICY KITCHEN MANAGEMENT & FOOD SAFETY

The Provider, management and staff of the Home have a responsibility to take all reasonable measures to prevent the occurrence of illness through food poisoning and to ensure as far as is reasonably practical the safety of residents through best hygiene.

Only trained food workers will enter the kitchen. The kitchen will be locked when approved staff are not in attendance.

Key safety factors are set out in this procedure and they will be adhered to at all times to ensure the safety of kitchen workers, residents and staff.

We will provide adequate resources in terms of facilities, equipment, staff and training in order that the catering facility can be maintained in a hygienic condition at all times and that the food we provide will always be safe for our residents.

A cleaning schedule will be implemented for equipment and premises and a nominated person will be assigned the various cleaning tasks.

A professional pest control company will be engaged and corrective action implemented immediately on evidence of infestation.

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- Our catering staff will be trained in all matters concerning good hygiene practices.
- The Management will arrange for regular audits of the Food Hygiene System.
- Records of audit findings will be maintained.

RESPONSIBILITY

Responsibility for safety in the kitchen rests with the chef/cook

MANAGING SAFETY IN THE KITCHEN

General.

- In order to ensure the health and safety of residents and staff the home is obliged to operate in accordance with the requirements of Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP). HACCP is intended to remove the hazards associated with food management, preparation and service.
- The kitchen should be off limits to residents and visitors. Only staff who are authorized to enter the kitchen should do so.
- Attention to manual handling techniques is particularly important in a kitchen where there may be loads, hot surfaces and wet floors. Staff who use the kitchen need relevant training.
- Equipment must be placed so as not to cause a hazard because of its proximity to other equipment. eg: a deep fat fryer should not be placed adjacent to a sink.
- There should always be enough room around for staff to move safely without bumping into one another.

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- People using knives need adequate space to work safely.
- Doors on equipment should not obstruct a gangway when open.
- Handles on pans, saucepans etc should not be turned outward.

Floors

Slips are the main cause of accidents in kitchens. A slip resistant floor surface should be provided in kitchen and serveries. The floor must be kept in good condition, clean and dry. Spillage must be cleaned up immediately and warning signage displayed.

Pesticides

If pesticides must be used, they must be approved for use in the kitchen area. They should only be used in accordance with the instructions on the label. Care must be taken to prevent contamination. When pesticides are applied by reputable, competent pest control operators, staff should liaise with them for advice on the product being used and the precautions to be taken.

Other factors which manage good pest control methodology:

- Fixed equipment shall be easily moved to facilitate cleaning
- Fly screens shall be fitted
- External doors shall be rodent proof and self-closers attached
- Detailed inspections shall be carried out quarterly by approved pest Control Company.
- Action will be taken immediately on evidence of infestation

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- Pesticides should not be allowed to contaminate food
- Grain bait shall not be used
- Cardboard shall not be used in wet areas
- Staff shall report suspected or actual infestation
- Sprays shall not be used close to food prep areas
- Domestic animals will be excluded
- Insect electrocuters shall be not more than 2.4 M above floor and left on permanently and UV changed annually.

Cleaning:

Cleaning is an important part of food safety. Generally there is a policy of “clean as you go” . This will reduce the risk of cross contamination.

- Cookers, ovens, extractors, dishwashers, deep fryers and racks must be cleaned weekly.
- Storage containers must be emptied and cleaned monthly
- Cooker head will be cleaned as necessary
- Mop buckets will be the two-chamber type and will not be washed in food preparation area cleaning cloths; pot scrubs shall be cleaned daily or disposed of.
- Insect catch trays must be cleaned weekly
- It is the responsibility of the Chef on duty to ensure that all cleaning is carried out to a pristine standard.
- Work surfaces must be cleaned down with sanitiser after each use.

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- Major deep cleaning of all surfaces including walls, ceilings and floors will be carried out quarterly
- Ducts and extractor hoods will be cleaned down monthly, as these are not only a food safety issue but also a fire hazard. Filters will be replaced in accordance with manufacturer's instructions.

Regular inspections will be carried out by management.

A monthly maintenance check is carried out by the chef/ manager and the results recorded

Equipment

Copies of all the documentation pertaining to equipment should be retained by the Chef. The following issues are important with regard to safety:

- Some types of equipment present a hazard and these should have the appropriate guards fitted. Anyone using the equipment must receive appropriate training. Equipment which could be considered a hazard includes meat slicers, food processors, mincers etc.
- Staff should be alert to breakages or damage to equipment and repairs should be carried out immediately or the equipment withdrawn from service pending repair or replacement.
- Cleaning is a key aspect of maintaining kitchen equipment. Apart from the regular day to day cleaning, deep cleaning should be carried out monthly. When deep cleaning is being carried out on a piece of equipment, the equipment should be isolated from the electrical supply.
- Equipment should never be run when the guards are not in place.

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The following are dangerous machines and staff using them should receive full instructions and training prior to using them:

- Worm type mincing machines
- Rotary bowl type chopping machines
- Food mixing machines where guards are not provided
- Vegetable slicing machines
- Circular knife slicing machines
- Potato chipping machines

Fat Fryers and Fire

- The ignition of hot fat is a well-known hazard.
- Fat fryers must be fitted with a thermostat to control the temperature of the fat.
- Fat fryers should not be left unattended while in use.
- Water and other liquids should not be brought into the proximity of a deep fat fryer.
- A Fire Blanket should be installed nearby and kitchen staff should be trained to deal with a fire in the deep fat fryer.

Hand Washing

High standards of personal hygiene (see below) is critical as is hand washing. Food workers should wash their hands in the special hand washing basin:

- After using the toilet
- Every time they enter the food area
- After handling raw foods
- After touching any part of the body or clothing
- After sneezing, coughing or nose blowing

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- After smoking
- After handling refuse
- After handling chemicals
- Fingernails must be short and clean
- Nail varnish must not be applied
- Do not use preparation sinks for hand washing

Hair

- Hair must be contained, with long hair tied back and fully contained in the hair covering hat.
- No trailing ends are permitted

Miscellaneous

- No jewellery / watches etc to be worn, other than a plain wedding band
- Perfumes and aftershave must be avoided
- The building is a No Smoking Zone
- Delivery personnel will not be allowed to enter the kitchen
- A laundry basket will be provided in the changing room for kitchen only soiled garments
- Cuts, burns and abrasions must be dealt with immediately
- A First Aid Box will be provided in the kitchen area
- The contents of the First Aid Kit will be checked monthly by the Chef/ Manager
- Any shortages must be replaced immediately.

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Refuse Disposal

- Food to be deposited in black plastic sacks
- Sacks to be tied at the neck
- Sacks to be deposited in appropriate bins immediately after meals

PPE

- All staff working in the kitchen will at all times be attired in clean clothing.
- Outdoor or personal outer clothing will not be worn by kitchen staff on duty.
- Protective clothing will not be worn outside the establishment.
- Kitchen staff will not enter bedrooms, en -suites, bathrooms or sluice rooms while wearing catering protective clothing.
- It is not practical to wear gloves while preparing food. However, gloves may be worn for specific tasks, such as cleaning fish.
- Shoes must be:
 - Dedicated Non slip reinforced toe cap
 - Clean

Specification for Clothing

- Catering Trousers
- Double breasted jacket with long sleeves fastened with studs, velcro or zips or catering type polo shirt
- Apron
- No open pockets above the waist line

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- Hairnets and hat
- Gloves as applicable

Temperature

See HACCP

COVID - 19

Wash hands regularly.

- Cover your mouth and nose when coughing and sneezing.
- Avoid close contact with anyone showing symptoms of respiratory illness, such as coughing and sneezing.
- If you have suspected symptoms of respiratory illness you should avoid preparing food for other people and seek medical attention.

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Restrict/reduce unnecessary self-serve stations where residents help themselves using shared utensils i.e. remove whole bread/loaves on buffets and offer pre-sliced bread – introduce pre-portioned bought in yoghurt to replaced self-help breakfast/muesli stations.

- Cover ALL unwrapped food using clear plastic lids or film.
- Introduce additional dining room/canteen surface and utensil cleaning – during (every 30 mins) and after each service. Assign clean teams. Identify common touch areas – menus, door handles, bannisters, handrails, chair backs etc.
- Close/restrict access to all drinking water bottle refill fountains throughout the Home. Discuss with residents temporarily introducing plastic bottled water.
- Communication about changes and why to all residents – digital signage, paper signage throughout dining room & canteen.
- Training & communication with food service employees. If you have an employee with a cough, a cold, or a sneeze, you should immediately ask them to wear a face mask and assess if medical attention is needed.
- Clean & disinfect menu's frequently using sanitizer/fresh menu's to be printed regularly.
- Practice distance table spacing of at least 1 metre apart in dining room /canteens
- Implement measures to reduce high traffic volumes such as assigning different lunch break slots, stagger break times etc.

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Bibliography

The Health Act 2007

National Quality Standards for Residential Care Settings for Older People in Ireland
Health Information and Quality Authority

The applicable Legislation and Regulations pertaining to Health, Welfare and Safety at Work

Health and Safety in Care Homes, HSE (UK) 2001.

The Food Safety Company